



Management Services

Addressing Employee Concerns

Thank you for participating in the 2007 Employee Survey. Ninety-two percent of Management Services (MSA) employees completed the survey - a two percent increase over the 2006 Survey. The high response rate affirms that you care a lot about MSA and want your voice to be heard in relation to workplace satisfaction.

The MSA survey results were informative and you shared feedback on the things you like about your work and changes you would like to see. While it is great to know there are many enjoyable aspects of coming to work each day, it's also important to know where we have room for improvement. I very much appreciate the time you took to provide honest and sincere feedback on changes you would like to see in the workplace.

I've reviewed the overall survey results, as well as the individual comments, and selected three areas to focus MSA improvement efforts:

- Employee Recognition
- Employee Feedback and Meaningful Performance Evaluations
- Communicating Agency and Administration Success

On the following pages you will find the MSA Action Plan for each of these areas. Each division and Management Services Fiscal Office will develop plans to address specific issues within their programs. In addition, Consolidated Support Services within Lands and Buildings (LBD) will develop a separate plan from LBD headquarters to address specific issues within their program. Those individual plans are due to me on April 30, 2008.

Again, thank you for participating in the employee survey. I value your opinions and look forward to continuing our efforts to strengthen MSA and make it the best possible work environment.

For more detailed information about the employee survey results, please visit the MSA home page on the web.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact
Wendy Long at (360) 902-8180.

- Kathleen Brockman, Chief Administrative Officer

**Employees say:**

"I enjoy the work and staff teamwork. Everyone in our work group works hard as a team. Love my job and workgroup."

"..I have the opportunity to work with a variety of different people, from line staff to appointing authorities. Each day is different, with different challenges to explore. I really value my supervisor, who appreciates me for my talents, and works with me on improving those areas that are more of a challenge for me."

" I like the fact that I get to learn new things about the agency all the time."

"Staff are encouraged to excel in the workplace. They know that they can come forward with new ideas and will be listened to. Our division as a whole is a great place to work!"

"My supervisor treats everyone in the group with respect and we are allowed to creatively come up with solutions to problems."

MSA Strengths

Over 75 percent of MSA employees taking the survey responded "always" or "usually" to these statements:

- I know what is expected of me at work. (86%)
- My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect. (82%)
- My supervisor holds me and my co-workers accountable for performance. (79%)
- I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency. (79%)
- In my workgroup, people are treated fairly, without discrimination. (75%)

"Always" or "usually" was the choice of at least 70 percent of respondents for the following statements:

- A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my workgroup. (73%)
- In general, I'm satisfied with my job. (70%)
- My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workgroup. (70%)

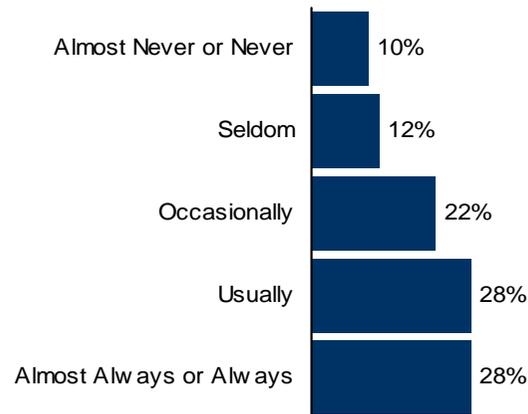
MSA employees like many things about their jobs, including:

- Challenging and diverse job responsibilities.
- Staff teamwork.
- Having the opportunity to help others.
- Supportive and kind supervisors.



Focus Issue: Employee Recognition

Question: *I receive recognition for a job well done.*



Employees say they would like to see:

"More thanks for a good job done. Sometimes just hearing good job makes all the difference in the world."

Summary of the Issue

Since the last survey, Management Services has made efforts to increase consistency of employee recognition and to improve the formal recognition process. In the current survey, we experienced a two percent increase in the number of employees responding that they almost always or usually receive recognition for a job well done. Some staff say they would like better recognition of deserving individuals and to see employee recognition be more meaningful. It's important that we take the time to recognize staff for "going above and beyond" their duties, but it is equally important to recognize staff for their day to day efforts to stay on top of busy workloads and complex assignments.

What we're already doing

- Developed a Kudos page on the MSA Intranet. The page is a great tool for everyone in MSA to publicly recognize the contributions of their staff/peers on an ongoing basis.
- Annual formal employee recognition events.

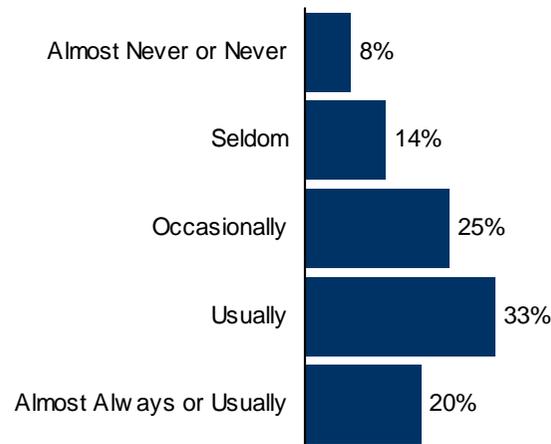
Our plan for the coming year

- Highlight new Kudos daily on the MSA homepage to more widely share the accomplishments and hard work of MSA staff.
- The CAO will ask MSA staff to share what they consider "meaningful" recognition via the "Talk to the CAO" mailbox on the MSA homepage.
- Encourage recognition at all levels throughout MSA, not relying solely on the formal annual recognition events.
- Ask supervisors to spend time with their staff seeing what they do, what they need to do it better, and where they struggle with priorities.



Focus Issue: Communicating Agency and Administration Success

Question: *I know how my agency measures its success.*



Employees say:

"There is always a need for more communication from the Secretary's Office. Staff can use more information on the department's achievements, difficulties, changes in priorities, budget projections, best practices, etc."

Summary of the Issue

How do we know we've been successful? In an agency as large as DSHS, it may not always be clear how success is measured. Even more importantly, we don't always remember (or have the time) to communicate our successes or celebrate them throughout the organization. Knowing that the agency or MSA has been successful, and how your work has contributed to that success, is an important factor in maintaining job satisfaction and fostering a sense that we are all working together towards a common mission and goals.

What we're already doing

- Including the Secretary/Deputy Secretary as guest speakers at the quarterly MSA Expanded Management Team meetings. Attendees are expected to share the information from these meetings within their work units.
- Redesigned the MSA Intranet site and use it as a primary vehicle for communicating information across the organization.

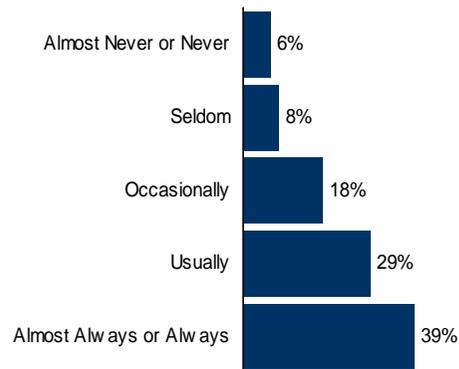
Our plan

- Incorporate GMAP as an integral activity within Management Services, including:
 - Quarterly presentations by select MSA program areas to Management Services Executive Management. Attendees are expected to share the information from these presentations within their work unit.
 - Inviting other administrations to give GMAP presentations at the quarterly MSA Expanded Management Team meetings. Attendees are expected to share the information from these presentations within their work unit.
 - Posting links to all DSHS GMAP presentations on the MSA website.
- Highlight significant Management Services successes on the MSA website.
 - Division Directors will be responsible for ensuring that key information is posted to the website in a timely manner.

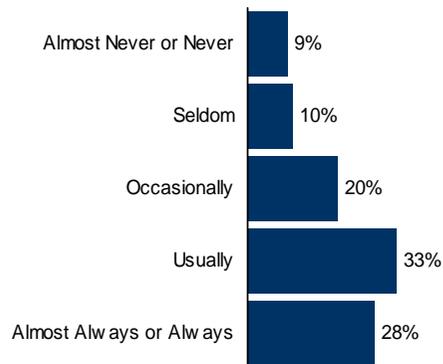


Focus Issue: Employee Feedback and Meaningful Performance Evaluations

Question: *My supervisor gives me ongoing feedback that helps me improve my performance*



Question: *My performance evaluation provides me with meaningful information about my performance*



Summary of the Issue

In the past 18 months, MSA has made efforts to improve the performance evaluation process. These efforts were prompted in part by input from the last survey, but also from an organizational value that communicating performance expectations and providing feedback on performance is critical to our collective success. The current survey responses indicate that we need to continue our efforts in providing meaningful performance evaluations as well as ensuring that we are giving regular and ongoing feedback to staff. Supervisors need to communicate goals and objectives so staff know what is expected; establish priorities; track and communicate outcomes related to those priorities; and spend time with their staff, understanding their day to day challenges and needs.

What we're already doing

- Conducted a mini-survey asking for employee feedback on the performance development process.
- Set clear expectations in MSA for supervisors to complete performance evaluations in a timely manner.
- Once the Performance Development Plan Phase 2 evaluation is complete, requiring each supervisor to initiate a new Performance Development Plan Phase 1 document for the upcoming performance period.
- Provided training to managers and supervisors on effective performance management. The training provided a complete overview for managers/supervisors on the performance development process and the development of quality plans.

Our plan for the coming year

- Develop an addendum to the performance development plan that allows for employee satisfaction feedback on the evaluation process.
- Set an expectation for supervisors to initiate a Performance Development Plan Phase 1 document within 30 days of hire for new employees.
- Offer additional training sessions for supervisors on performance management and motivating staff.
- Encourage managers to hold regular unit meetings and one-on-one meetings with staff to facilitate ongoing communication and feedback.

Employees say they would like to see:

"Timely responses/feedback to questions...Sometimes it takes a long time to get a response from management to simple questions/comments."



Other important issues

These are also important issues that we need to be aware of:

- Employees want to have the opportunity to provide input and feedback in the decision-making process.
- Employees want adequate and appropriate training opportunities.
- Employees want work schedule flexibility.
- Workforce development – employees want opportunities to grow and promote throughout the organization.

Our plan

- Although the focus of the Employee Survey Action Plan is on areas of improvement, we're also mindful of what you've said we're doing well and want to maintain these strengths.
- Issues and suggestions will be considered in everyday decision making.
- Staff/managers/supervisors are encouraged to work on and discuss the MSA areas of focus at the workgroup level.
- Encourage staff to share feedback and concerns throughout the year via the Talk to the CAO mailbox found on the MSA homepage.
- Explore development of a MSA overview document to orient new employees to the mission, goals, and roles of each division and their linkages internally and across the agency.

Once again, thank you for your thoughtful input. While we can't address each and every issue identified in the employee survey comments, we are mindful of these concerns. We'll do our best to implement change and improvements in the three focus areas identified and, whenever possible, in other areas.